

people another support to try to help with higher education.

Mr. KENNEDY. The Senator is quite correct. There is a very interesting statistic for those who enter medical school. 85 percent of medical students want to become general practitioners. They care about patients and want to be there on the front line treating the families of America. However, they end up borrowing so much to pay for their school costs that they need to enter specialization because of the salary differences at the very time we need more general practitioners.

I draw the attention of my colleagues to the chart and what has happened with grants and loans. My colleagues remember the great debates held on providing greater access to higher education for all Americans, those national debates go back to 1960. President Kennedy believed the size of your pocketbook should not determine what university a student attends, only your qualifications should determine where you could attend school. Grants, some loans, work-study programs, summer employment should add up to the cost of your tuition and fees. All of those match together in an economic package so a student can successfully go to the school of their choice.

I was in the Education Committee when Secretary Bennett said: Too bad. Those families can go where the loans will take them. That is our view of this Republican administration. That is the attitude. We do not want to limit opportunity. I know where that is in the RECORD.

We have seen the buying power of grants fail to keep up with the costs of college. The neediest children are forced to take out loans. Now we find at a time when these young students and graduates are trying to take advantage of refinancing their loans, we are hearing the administration saying: No, we need another \$1.3 billion for our tax program so we are going to force students to wait and see what the interest rate will be every year instead of locking in at a fixed rate. That is regrettable.

I draw another chart to the attention of my colleagues. This is a women's issue. Education is one way that we can help women close the earnings gap. When you deny women the opportunities to continue education, you continue a perpetuation of the notable disparity taking place. Women, like their male counterparts, increase their earnings when they increase their education.

Once you put the economic binds by effectively denying people the ability to discharge debt, this will work against women students. We see it already. We will see it even grow over the period of time.

Mr. DURBIN. Will the Senator yield?

Mr. KENNEDY. I yield.

Mr. DURBIN. The Senator was part of an effort that many joined with President Bush: Leave no child behind. The idea was to improve the quality of

education across America, to make certain, with accountability, that schools were graduating students who had the basic wherewithal to succeed in society.

One of the linchpins was to improve teachers in the classroom.

I would like the Senator from Massachusetts to tell me if I recall this correctly. Are we moving through President Bush's bill to a point where more and more teachers have to be certified in that they are going to teach in schools? In other words, you cannot be the gym teacher who says, I will teach biology. You have to stand in front of the classroom with students.

We are passing bills saying, teachers, we want you to stay in school, get more advanced degrees, and be more valuable in the marketplace but come back to the classroom. And now the Bush administration, months later, comes in and increases the cost of education for those who aspire to be those quality teachers. There is a disconnect.

Mr. KENNEDY. The Senator is absolutely correct. It is a powerful, powerful argument. We are trying to make sure we are going to have a well-qualified teacher in every classroom. More and more young people who are entering teaching are saddled with enormous debt burden. As a national objective, have a well-qualified teacher in every classroom. How can these young professionals afford to pay off their loans when we know that too many teachers are underpaid.

And the Senator quite rightly points out that will require tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands, of teachers to get certification and to go back to universities and colleges, community colleges, to get these certifications.

This kind of activity is going to make it that much more expensive, that much more of a disincentive to go into teaching. That is enormously important and significant. I thank my colleague for bringing this critical fact to the floor.

I see my friend from Rhode Island who has been such a leader in education, and follows a very proud tradition in his state. We give fair notice to the administration that we are going to do everything we possibly can legislatively do to make sure this does not take place. We want to keep as many low-cost options for borrowers as possible to make sure that more people are getting college degrees. We will have more to say about this in the very near future.

I yield the floor and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. KENNEDY). Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Illinois is recognized.

Mr. DURBIN. I thank the Chair.

(The remarks of Mr. DURBIN pertaining to the introduction of S. 2393 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Mr. DURBIN. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the Senate proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators allowed to speak therein for a period not to exceed 5 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I also ask unanimous consent that the time we are in morning business be charged against the 30 hours postcloture on the matter now before the Senate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNIZING THE UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER VOLUNTEERS IN LAS VEGAS, NEVADA

Mr. REID. Mr. President, as we celebrate National Volunteer Week I would like to recognize the 300 volunteers at the University Medical Center in Las Vegas, NV who are committed to providing young Nevadans with more promising futures.

As a group, U.M.C.'s 300 volunteers donated 49,700 hours of time in 2001. Their contribution of volunteer time and talent has enormously improved the efficiency and effectiveness of University Medical Center. Through their efforts, these volunteers have helped build a better community. The programs that they have participated in include U.M.C.'s Medical Explorer Program, the Volunteer Youth Corps, the "Pal" program of Las Vegas High School, and the "Medical Magnet Program of Rancho High School, all of which have positively impacted the youth of Nevada.

In addition, for almost 40 years U.M.C. Auxiliary, a group chartered by the Clark County Board of Trustees, has volunteered and raised millions of dollars for the discretionary use of the hospital including the purchase of needed medical equipment. Having recently been challenged to raise even more money for the hospital, the Auxiliary presented a donation of \$300,000 to the Clark County Board of Trustees on April 16.